

ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

## THE ECONOMY OF PERMANENCE

(A quest for a social order based on non-violence)

BY

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PART IV

MAN IN GREGATION

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## ECONOMY OF PERMANENCE Part II

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## INTRODUCTION

In the first part of this book we considered man as an individual and saw how he acts as a single creature. We noticed the way Nature works and we observed that science is our study of Nature and its working, and the object of science is to enable man to work along the lines on which the universe moves. Any deviation from this leads us into violence and disorder. Most creatures work in alignment with Nature merely by instinct, but man, with his gift of freewill and intelligence, co-operates with Nature consciously, this being the main difference between the lower orders and man. We noted the various standards of values that man, in this conscious existence, utilizes to gauge his action and the part work plays in developing and improving his faculties.

When man works in this way he is able to bring about an economy of permanence which will do away with the need for periodic upheavals in the form of global wars.

In this second part of the book we shall study how man lives in Gregation.

Among animals also there are to be observed forces which bring like creatures together for certain purposes. In the case of animals of prey, such as the wolf, they hunt in packs, their motive is self-centred and their life is parasitic.

On the other hand, we have animals which get together, for motives other than aggression, and very often purely for defence, such as herds of cattle and elephants. Here though taken individually each has a selfish motive in its own safety, yet in the aggregate each has a duty in defending the whole.

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The social and economic order of the West as we had observed in the first part, being parasitic, can be placed in the pack type of gregation, depending for its welfare on the harm it can do to other groups. From the parasitic stage we advance on through predatory and enterprising stages to the gregarious stage.

In the gregarious stage, as we have seen, there can be two kinds, the pack type which represents the right-centred economy and the herdtype which represents the duty-centred economy

As man evolves, his consciousness of duties enlarges and he becomes more and more aware, not of the benefits he gets by being a member of society, but of the duties he is to perform towards the well-being of that society. In the final stage he reaches the service economy in which he realizes himself in the service of others

In this part of the book we shall consider not the gregation of the pack type but man working together for the common good of mankind.

What the world needs today is the knowledge of how people can work together and bring about general welfare of mankind without involving the destruction of others. It may be that in this economy the apparent well being may not be flashy but it would certainly be lasting.

The Western pack-type gregation economy is today an example of what would be the result of following those methods. Those who have eyes to see need only behold and note in what state Europe is today to study the end of the pack-type gregation. Nearly 150 years of large scale production at a feverish heat has resulted in starvation and nakedness

and lack of consumer goods, not to mention the millions of lives that have been lost and the untold material wealth that has been either blown up into the air or sunk in the sea, leaving man tearing his hair not knowing what to do next. The pack-type gregation, therefore, is one of which we should beware, as we are interested only in bringing about an economy of permanence. The economy of pack-type gregation ultimately leads to conflict and destruction. Though it may seem to flourish for a while it ends up in a conflagration and therefore it is in the long run a transient economy. Hence we need not spend our time and effort in studying the working of this type of economy in India.

For our part, as we are interested in an economy of permanence, we have to study how man should act in a group and as a group to be able to work towards an economy of permanence.

In the first part of this book we saw man's action individually in the group. We studied the values that should govern his consumption.

In this second part we shall see how man should act as a group in production as well as in distribution. Here there are three forms in which man may be said to work as a group. (1) In production he works individually, though in certain processes he may have to combine with others similarly placed. This part of man's work along with his neighbours considers, not only his interest, but also theirs and in the long run his larger interests. (2) Then man works jointly, in a group of similar interests, this we call co-operative effort, which is the second type of work in gregation. (3) Then comes the third type where the short range work having been assigned to individuals and co-operative

bodies, the purely long range work is taken up by a body of selfless individuals who perform their duties purely with a view to benefit society at large. Such a group we call the State. At the present time it is difficult to point out anywhere in the world where the State is composed of the type of individuals who would be qualified to undertake this responsibility. The present forms of States are largely failing in their duty towards the common man.

We shall first take up planning for the group, then we shall consider how economic activity is carried on by individuals in conjunction with their fellow-being. Then we shall look at the various functions that can be done by co-operative effort, and finally we shall study how the State can work and what the State can do to accomplish the ends for which the people are striving. In all of these we have to keep before us the various principles we have studied in the first part, as these will also govern the actions of men when they act in gregation.

The scheme put forward in part I and part II, if worked out thoroughly, ought to lead us ultimately to a social order based on non-violence which should provide the people with plenty as far as their primary needs are concerned and would bring about peace amongst nations.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE NEED AND NATURE OF PLANNING

What is it that we plan for ? Many people think that national planning is a very intricate matter to be understood only by technicians and experts. Planning will have no life if the man in the street does not understand what we are planning for. We cannot call it national planning if the farmers do not comprehend the purpose of it and lend their whole-hearted support to the carrying out of the plan. Unless we are able to get that intellectual understanding we shall not be able to carry through our plan, except by tremendous violence as has been done in Russia. We do not want bloodshed to carry out our plan. The people should understand whether or not what is laid before them is to their interest. If they approve of it we shall have their willing co-operation.

Our object is to organise the villages for a happier, more prosperous and fuller life in which the individual villager will have the opportunity to develop both as an individual and as a unit of a well integrated society. This has to be done by using local initiative and local resources to the utmost extent possible in the economic, political and social fields, building these on co-operative lines. Self-reliant and properly organised life in the villages will thus be the aim of our planning. Whatever schemes of activity are taken up locally should not merely be good for the locality, but should

fit in harmoniously with the general plan. Such work should ultimately lead to the establishment of a just and democratic social order.

### WHAT IS PLANNING

Planning means the getting together of certain factors to serve an end. What are the factors in India that we have got to get together? There may be factors today in our plans that do not exist in other countries. Therefore, the plan that Russia has taken or the plan that England or America has followed need not necessarily be the same that will lead us to the goal.

When the plan of Great Britain is mentioned it will cause astonishment. People have never heard of it. The British do not plan but they work to plan. That is their genius. They get every man to work to a certain plan. Were there no plans there would have been no British Empire and there would be no British trade. So the whole of their financial schemings and imperial preferences, the fleet, and the shipping policy—all these make the plan. It may not be a national plan, it may be a London centred plan, or may be a Bank of England centred plan, but it is a plan all the same.

Therefore all these plans whether it is the Soviet Plan, or the American Plan, or the British Plan—they all have certain factors for their background. If these factors do not exist in our country and those circumstances do not hold good here at present, and yet if we plan on the same lines as they had done, then we shall surely fail.

### PLAN OF ACTIVITY

In India, afflicted with poverty, dirt, disease and ignorance, our plan should cover the following main centres of activity.

1. Agriculture
2. Village Industries
3. Sanitation, Health and Housing
4. Village Education
5. Village Organisation
6. Village Culture.

### THE AIM

When the Russians planned, Russia was under the Czarist regime. The aristocrats were rolling in wealth and the peasants were extremely oppressed. Naturally, the peasants said "When we come into power, we must be rolling in wealth." Rolling in wealth means satisfying a multiplicity of wants—palatial houses, plenty of material goods, pleasures and the rest of it—and they made that their goal and they worked towards that. Their plans took root in that soil.

It has been repeatedly stated that we want to remove poverty. Poverty again is a term which requires definition. Poverty, somebody said, is inability to meet your wants. But what is your want? Is a Rolls Royce car a want? If you cannot meet that want, are you poor? If a lady wants a lip-stick and has not got enough cash to purchase it, is she poor? There are wants which are primary needs, and there are also wants which are artificially created. There are wants without satisfying which a human being cannot live, they are needed for the expressing of his personality and for the existence of his physical body. These are the natural wants we shall endeavour to supply, not the artificially created wants.

What is the greatest of primary needs? First comes food. We may go without clothing, but we cannot go without

food In our country we are having not occasional famines, but repeated famines, and, therefore, the primary factor in our plan must be the attempt to meet that situation. Food and the prevention of famines; how are we going to achieve that? Is it by application of Capital? Many people come out and say "You apply capital, and then your results will be so much more" Learned economists have worked out the amount of capital to be applied and the percentages of increased production that will result from it, as if we have only to pour capital into the fields before they come up in crops! That cannot be the case.

In our country, the tremendous factor for production is human labour If we wish to meet our needs we have got to utilise this enormous factor, for producing commodities to satisfy hunger

As regards the method of production, there is general feeling abroad that we can build up the economic condition of the people by introducing large centralised units of production with modern machinery This is a conception that requires to be examined carefully before we yield to it Organising economic production means bringing together various factors in the proper manner The chief of such factors are natural resources, capital equipment and labour Under varying conditions varying combinations of these may be called for In Britain, at the time of the Industrial Revolution, capital was plentiful and so in their method of production capital equipment looms large In the U S A. labour was scarce while natural resources were almost inexhaustible, hence they took to labour-saving devices leading to the advent of machinery. Expansion of such an economic organisation will naturally lead to "saving of labour" or, in other words, creation of unemployment Hence, in our country, where capital is

scarcce and labour is plentiful, the methods followed in Great Britain and the U S. A. will naturally be out of place.

Man himself is a machine of a fine type with this difference that, unlike a mechanical contrivance, he has to be kept alive by feeding, whether he works or not. Hence, even if we produce materials for consumption by mechanical aids the people will have to be fed. Therefore, the efficient utilization of the factors available will indicate extensive use of man-power as the normal method of production in our country. If we fail to adopt this mode we shall be guilty of throwing away the great labour wealth of our country. Such a course can never lead us to prosperity

The well-being of a nation does not consist merely in the output of material production. This production is important only in so far as it enables the people to meet their wants. In the first instance, therefore, we must proceed to organize the people to produce goods to satisfy their own needs, in regard to food materials to afford them an adequate diet, clothing to protect them against the weather and proper shelter; then we should arrange for their physical, mental and moral welfare by making available medical aid, education and other social amenities. Before these elementary needs are fully met, it would be folly to aim at producing goods for the export market. Money in itself satisfies nothing except the miser's pleasure of counting it. Money is not an end in itself. If our organization is such as to put much money in the hands of the people and yet let them starve for lack of food materials, it would stand condemned. Hence, our first care is to see that the people are satisfactorily fed, clothed and housed, and only after these necessities have been adequately provided for can they be allowed to indulge in

other production. To direct economic activity into this course is the first duty of any government worth the name.

Apart from the mere satisfaction of the physical needs of the people we should aim at inculcating the spirit of self-help, mutual aid, and a consciousness of social solidarity. When we achieve this end we shall have travelled a long way on the road to Swaraj through self-sufficiency.

Here again we have to bear in mind that our plan concerns not merely a few people but every citizen in this country. The plan that we propose, if it is to be a satisfactory plan, must touch every living person in India. A broad-based plan like that, in a poverty-stricken country as ours, where finance is not available, cannot be based on the presumption that capital is available. Hence, any plan based on the availability of capital is out of court in India, and any plan that leaves out the primary need of supplying food is also out of court, and any plan that omits to take note of the factor of Indian labour wealth cannot be a proper plan for India. The Western plans are material centred. That is to say, they want to exploit all resources. To what end? That they were not sure of. Tables and chairs do not satisfy our primary needs.

If it is to be a plan for India, the plan must centre round the farmer first and then grow out of it for the whole country. It may be that ultimately we may not be as rich as England or America but we will have sufficient food. England was on the brink of starvation five years ago.

Therefore, self-sufficiency in food and clothing should be one of the prime features in any plan for India. If every village cannot be self-sufficient in food and clothing, it is no use having Swaraj. We want to assure to everybody enough

food and clothing. And unless we do that, it is no plan for our country. The Tata-Birla Plan and others of its ilk require thousands and thousands of crores of rupees to get them going. For this plan we do not require much money because we are not working on a thing which we have not got. We are only rechanneling the people's activity, we are only showing them the right way, we are only regulating their natural activities, and thereby we control the activities of millions of people into desirable lines.

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## CHAPTER II

### AGRICULTURE

Our first care must be food and clothing. To this end we must concentrate on Agriculture and Village Industries. Agricultural production should be regulated and controlled keeping in mind two main considerations. 1. The locality must try to produce all its own food requirements and raw materials for primary necessities of life. 2. It must aim to supply raw materials suitable for village industries rather than for factories. For example, instead of growing thick rind sugarcane or long staple cotton, as demanded by the factories, soft rind sugarcane as can be crushed by the village "kolhus" for gur making and short staple cotton as required for hand spinning should be grown. The surplus land can be utilized to supplement crops needed by surrounding districts. Land utilized for sugarcane for the factory, tobacco, jute and other money crops should be reduced to the minimum, and, if need be, even eliminated altogether. In order to make the farmers adopt this policy, utilization of land should be regulated by issuing licenses by the government authorising the farmer to grow certain crops only according to the plans for the province and heavy dues and extra land revenue



should be levied on land used to raise money crops. This will restrain the farmer's incentive to go in for money crops in preference to food crops. On the whole, prices of agricultural products should be made to compare favourably with those of industrial products by suitable controls.

Commercial crops such as tobacco, jute, sugarcane etc., are doubly wasteful. They reduce the food production for man as well as for animals which would otherwise have got their fodder from food crops.

Primary products like cereals and milk should not be allowed to be used for commercial purposes for obtaining starch and casien. The supply of gur which may fall, due to the decline in the cultivation of factory varieties of sugarcane, can be made good by the production of gur from palm trees now tapped for toddy or from those which are found or can be grown in waste lands in sufficient numbers as to fully meet our demand in this respect and the best of land which is under sugarcane today, can be utilized for the production of cereals, fruits and vegetables that the country needs so badly.

The first thing is to start with a balanced diet. In India we have people living on cereals only, and cereals do not provide all that is necessary for the body in a compact form. If we can arrange our cultivation, so that every village cultivates what is necessary for a balanced diet, we can easily secure a balanced diet. In that way we can work out the acreage that is necessary for a particular type of food.

It is ordinarily presumed that an acre of land provides more calories through the production of grains than through any other food. But, apart from the question of calories, the

grains are very poor suppliers of protective food factors. Therefore if we aim at getting those factors from cereals only huge quantities of grains will be required. On the other hand, if the grains are substituted and supplemented by foods like fruits and vegetables, milk and its products, gur, nuts and oilseeds, etc, the protective food factors required to make up a balanced diet may be obtained through lesser quantities of these types of food than through grains alone. Even the supply of calories per acre is greater in the case of gur and of the root vegetables like potato than in the case of cereal grains. Thus, a balanced diet may be a double blessing and may offer the solution to our problem. It reduces the per capita requirement of land and at the same time, it supplies the body with all its requirements in their correct proportions so as to keep it fit and healthy. It is calculated that the per capita land available in India at present for food cultivation comes to about 0.7 acres. This very land which is found to be too inadequate to meet our requirements in food according to the present distribution of cultivation, becomes sufficient in the re-ordered system of agriculture. In this manner the land of the locality should be so distributed for the purpose of growing crops as to provide its population with all the needed materials for a balanced diet, clothing and all primary necessities. This aspect of the question when thoroughly investigated and a definite plan chalked out should be enforced by licensing farmers to grow only certain crops on their lands. The table on the next page shows land distribution for balanced cultivation for a population of one lakh. This table provides for a balanced vegetarian diet yielding 2,860 calories per day for the average person and allows for the growing of cotton for 25 yards of cloth per annum per head. For non-vegetarian diet 6 ozs. of milk may be substituted by 4 ozs. of meat or fish and one egg.

DISTRIBUTION OF CULTIVATION PER LAKH OF POPULATION

	Ozs per day	Calories	Lbs per annum	Per lakh of population			Percentage and distribution
				Land required (in acres)	For seed and waste 15% extra	Total	
I. DIET							
Cereals	16	1600	365 00	43,400	6,510	49,910	65.2
Pulses	2	200	45 60	5,400	810	6,210	8.0
Gur	2	200	45 60	1,200	180	1,380	1.8
Nuts	1	145	22.80	2,600	290	2,990	8.4
Oil	$\frac{1}{2}$	255	11.40	3,000	450	3,450	
Ghee	$\frac{1}{2}$	—	11.40	..	...	...	.
Milk	12	240	273 75	...	...	...	.
Vegetables	8	48	182 50	1,600	240	1,840	2.4
Potatoes, Tubers	4	100	91 25	1,000	150	1,150	1.5
Fruits	4	52	91 25	900	135	1,035	1.4
II CLOTHING							
Cotton			12 50	7,500	1,125	8,625	11.3
Total		2860		66,600	9,990	76,590	100.0

Rough calculations based on all-India statistics, which of course will differ from place to place, have been given. If we allow 16 ozs. of cereals per individual, it means that 65.2 per cent of our land will have to be under cereals. Similarly, if we provide 2 ozs. of pulses per head, it means 8 per cent of our land will have to be under that cultivation.

This table is worked out on a basis of a lakh of people. If a village or contiguous area can grow these things in this proportion, then the people will have their primary wants satisfied. Hence, we must aim at growing these things. The land is a social asset, and it has got to be utilized exactly as it is needed for the community. If a man says, "I have got so many acres of land, I am going to grow tobacco" he has no right to grow tobacco simply because it may bring him more money. In a society there are many things which we cannot do as we individually would wish. You cannot, for instance, drive on the right side of the road. The ownership in land is yours no doubt, but you have got to have the use of your land marshalled in such a way that it benefits every body. Therefore, it is suggested that a man must take out licenses for cultivating certain products. The man who has been licensed to cultivate linseed cannot grow tobacco even if it paid him ten times as much.

Our object is to keep the production of the villages in the villages as far as people require it; only the surplus will be exchanged with other regions for the stuff that we require. For instance, if cotton is grown in a particular village, it cannot go to the textile-mill and come back as cloth, for the simple reason that for the process of the change we have got to pay something in the form of export of commodities. If we do not want to part with our food products, we have to convert our cotton into cloth in spare time. When we do that, we retain the whole production of food, and we also get our clothing. Therefore, we are doubly benefited. Incidentally the textile-millowners suffer. We are sorry for them but we have got to safeguard the poor villager. Our plan is for the betterment of the villager. And when we start with that thing and work in that way, then only we

shall find that the villagers are self-sufficient in food and clothing.

Thus, having before us the ingredients of a balanced diet, we proceed to secure these through the proper laying out of the cultivable land to produce the required materials to feed the population. Then only, where there happens to be a surplus after the full needs of the local population have been satisfied, should any efforts at sending such products outside be countenanced. The marketing department would be a traitor to the land if it helped or aided in the export of materials which are in deficit even to meet the needs of the people. Similarly steps should be taken to procure all materials needed to put the people gainfully to work.

## CHAPTER III

### EXCHANGE

#### Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies

Co-operative societies are ideally suited organizations not only for developing village industries, but also for promoting group effort by the villagers. A multi-purpose village society can make itself very effective in a variety of ways such as:

1. Stocking of raw materials for industries and food grains needed by the village people.
2. Marketing of surplus village products and distributing the requirements of the people.
3. Supplying and distributing seeds, improved implements and tools, manures, such as bone-meal, flesh and fish manure, seeds etc.
4. Maintaining a common stud bull for the area.
5. Standing between the government and the people in the matter of collection and payment of taxes, etc.

Much of the wastage caused to foodgrains in transport and handling and the expenses of bringing food grains to a central place and redistributing them again to the village can be eliminated through the agency of a co-operative society which can be a very reliable medium both from the government as well as from the public point of view.

The farmer retains the necessary amount of wheat for his family requirements and the surplus he deposits in the co-operative society and in return he gets the things he requires on the strength of credit he has thus created with the society. Government revenue could also be paid in kind in the same way and not necessarily in cash. Today revenue

collections in cash from villagers cause a great hardship. If stocks of grain are held by co-operative societies in villages, the remuneration also of local officials can be conveniently paid partly in kind.

Money economy does not report true values. The values are changed as money passes from one individual to another. There is a great difference in value between the rupee in the hands of a poor man and a rupee in the hands of a rich man. Such transfers either increase the national wealth or impoverish the nation. Superficially a rupee appears to be a rupee, but in practice it is not so. A rupee in the hands of a poor man may mean 4 or 5 days' food provisions, whereas in the hands of a millionaire, it may represent the value of a cigar. Thus, when a rupee passes from the hands of a poor man into the hands of a millionaire it loses its value considerably, conversely, money when it goes from the rich to the poor it enhances in value. Hence we have got to see that in our economy we prevent money going into the hands where it will lose its value and this is what the multi-purpose co-operative society should attempt to do. It will collect the produce from the villager and will pay the government revenue in wheat or other commodities. It will pay government officials on government account in articles of food which will provide a balanced diet and when all this is carried out, ultimately, there will be only a very small adjustment to be made between government and the multi-purpose societies and that also can be done by transfer of surplus between different regions. If that can be managed we shall neutralise, though not eliminate, the evils of money economy and retain the true value as dictated by commodity value as distinct from money value.

## CHAPTER IV

### CO-OPERATIVE FUNCTION

#### **The Function of a Bank ;**

The function of any bank is to lubricate the wheels of commerce and industry and keep them moving smooth with the least friction. In addition to this a co-operative institution has to bring about active co-operation between the various factors in the whole economic organization.

The Western banks, based on money economy, count their progress by the amount of deposits etc they have received and profits made. We cannot do that. We have to appraise the work of a bank in its relation to the well-being of the people. It has to perform various functions in the economic activity of the people and serve their needs even if it meant a loss financially. We cannot ascertain the part a bank has played by any calculation based on rupees, annas and pies.

Western banking system has been, like the needle of the Hypodermic syringe, used by the financial exploiters to draw out the life blood of the producers. The last famine of 1943 in which about 3 millions lost their lives in Bengal alone, is largely attributable to such misuse of banking powers vested in the Reserve Bank which enjoys, along with the Imperial Bank, the advantage of being the custodian of public funds, but their work is a tragedy to the people of the land. This is because of the misuse of money.



Money, when used as an instrument of exchange or as a means of storage of purchasing power, functions satisfactorily. The tokens used as money are generally imperishable as compared with commodities and hence the money holder is at an advantage as he has the bargaining power. A plantation seller has to dispose of her goods before they rot and spoil but the money holder suffers from no such disadvantage. He can hold on to his money for any length of time. Therefore, in this inequality there is a factor which may be used by the money holder to exploit the commodity holder. Banks as a rule are holders of money. How they use their advantageous position will determine the part they play in commerce and industry. Where a bank uses its power for strengthening its own position as an institution, and if the position of its customers deteriorates as a consequence, such a bank cannot be said to fulfil its purpose in the economic organization. This is as regards money as a medium of exchange.

### **Money as Storage of Purchasing Power.**

Again, as regards its comparative imperishability, the right use of this quality in money is to afford storage of purchasing power to the people. A farmer cultivates his fields and disposes of his produce after harvest. He realises a certain amount in money. This money has to last him till the next harvest. That is he should be able to exchange it for other commodities of like value over a period of twelve months. If in this period the purchasing power is altered, the position of the farmer also fluctuates in the same way. Therefore, an unalterable storage of purchasing power is a prime necessity in an agricultural country like ours. In this function, multi-purpose co-operative societies can help by restricting the spread of money economy, thus limiting the chances of fluctuation and speculation and by rendering

reasonable banking services based on the security of commodities as will prevent the farmer having to dispose of his whole stock at a time.

### Co-operation

This brings us to the second function of co-operation. Co-operation implies the elimination of competition and working in a kind of partnership resulting in advantages to all. Its basic requirement is an identity of interest of parties to the enterprise. There can be no exploitation in co-operation. Therefore there can be no co-operation with an exploiter at one end and his victim at the other end. Foreigners come to sell their goods to us. That is their only interest in us. It is for that they hold others in political bondage. If co-operative societies help hand-loom weavers to obtain American yarn they are linking up incompatibles and therefore are not functioning in the true spirit of co-operation. Their legitimate sphere would be to bring local village spinners and weavers into a living touch with one another. They have to bring about co-operation all along the line—raw material produced with the artisan and then with the consumer. The co-operative societies should be the link binding all parties together—like a silver wire that holds the pearls together.

A co-operative bank can protect the unsophisticated villagers from being duped by the government minions. Such institutions can collect the produce, store it, pay on behalf of their constituents, dues, taxes, revenue, etc. sell the goods at proper market rates, right through the year, without dumping the whole stock at a time on the market and thus causing extreme fluctuations in the price of commodities. They can function like the water-tight compartments of the ocean liner and be the shock absorber in the economic organization.

The test of the proper functioning of co-operative institutions can be seen not in their financial balance sheets but in the bazars around. If these shops are stocked with mill produced goods or foreign imported articles it signifies that there has been no co-operative effort to bring the various factors of production to supply all our needs. If the co-operative institutions function properly it will promote self-sufficiency in all our primary needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. When this happens there will be nothing to attract the cupidity of the foreign manufacturer. If not there will be no international jealousies leading to global wars. Thus the development of co-operative institutions on right lines can lead to national independence and through that to international peace.

### Manure

Much of the waste of the village, including sweepings, bones, human excreta, etc that endanger the sanitation of the village at present, could be utilized by making compost manure. This is very easily done and it is as good a manure as cow dung. Bones and oil cakes, which are usually exported out of the country, should not be allowed to leave the villages. The bones should be crushed locally with the help of the *chunam chakkis*, after being charred a little in the *chunam bhattis* and the meal distributed amongst the farmers. Manure making in villages may be given out on subsidised contracts. This will ensure the cleanliness of the village while raising the status of the sweepers engaged in making compost and manure to the level of traders.

Oil mills, which take away oil seeds from the villagers and give only oil in return, sending the cake abroad, are depriving the land of the valuable form of fertilizer. This must be stopped altogether. This is one of the fundamental

reasons why oil seeds should not be allowed to go out of the villages but should be crushed in the local co-operatives. This will retain both the oil and the cake in the village and enrich men, cattle and the land.

In the name of increasing the fertility of the soil, great attempts are being made to introduce chemical fertilizers. The experience gained through the use of such chemical fertilizers throughout the world is clear enough to warn us of their inroads. They do not add to the fertility of the soil but act as stimulants or drugs so that the land yields up its fertility resulting in immediate bumper crops, but in the end bring about a corresponding exhaustion of the land. They also destroy a host of earth worms so essential to maintain the fertility of the soil. In the long run, such artificial fertilizers prove to be most injurious to the land. Behind the specious pleading for the chemical fertilizers lies the anxiety of the fertilizer factory owners to push the sale of their products irrespective of the harm or injury they do to agriculture.

### Seeds

Selected and improved varieties of seeds are essential if agriculture is to flourish. What is wanted in this regard is the machinery for effective distribution of seeds in the form of co-operative societies which should run seed farms under able research workers.

### Grain Storage

Enormous loss of grain occurs through bad storage alone. Such loss is estimated on a conservative basis to be about 3.5 million tons, an amount equal to the declared deficit of grains in India during 1946. The qualitative loss caused by insects, rodents, dampness, etc. all caused by bad storage arrangements resulting in all kinds of diseases, is equally great.

If storage arrangements are made locally all the waste through bad storage, loss by insects, etc., and conveyance charges will be eliminated.

The storage problem is both an urgent and a permanent one and should be tackled in all earnestness and seriousness. In any case, holding stocks in ill-protected godowns, as at present, should be stopped.

Big towns and cities, where proportionately larger stocks of grain are to be held, can build *pucca* cement godowns. These can be built either by the Municipality or by private people to be rented out for grain storage, or better still, by Co-operative Societies. These godowns should be licensed and subjected to periodical inspection, like the boilers are at present.

If the stocks are held in the villages where they are produced and all their movements to town and back to villages are eliminated, the chances of their getting damaged are, of course, reduced.

Individual holders of stock also should be educated in the methods for the preservation of grain.

### **Conservation of Raw Materials in the Villages.**

The greatest handicap from which village industries suffer is the utter resourcelessness of the artisan. Being unorganised he is unable to stand against the competition from his resourceful and organised rivals the mills. With all the resources at their command, the mills practically monopolise the raw materials and corner the market even for the finished products, leaving the isolated artisans utterly helpless. The financial policy of the banks, discriminative railway freight rates and the capitalistic marketing organization,

all favour the working of large-scale production to the exclusion of the artisans. The artisans are left with hardly any raw materials in the villages. This process needs to be reversed. All raw materials produced in the villages should be conserved and consumed in their place of production and only the surplus that remains after satisfying local needs should be allowed to be sent out. Production should be directed towards raw materials needed by village industries rather than towards those required by factories.

### **Supply of Tools and Implements.**

Tools and implements of village industries are not generally of uniform efficiency throughout the land and often even in one province. Research should be directed towards devising suitable instruments.

Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies should arrange for the regular supply of equipment and spare parts to village artisans.

### **District Demonstration Centres**

Demonstration centres of Co-operative Societies should be located in rural areas. Their functions should be as follows.-(1) To manufacture and supply implements and tools to village artisans and to introduce improved implements in place of old type ones. (2) To train carpenters and other artisans and to teach them the latest methods introduced into the various industries. (3) To collect tools and exhibits of local art and display them in a museum. (4) To carry on industrial and health surveys in the district. (5) To work in-co-ordination with other co-operative societies and the Hindustani Talimi School for the general uplift of the villages

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## CHAPTER V

### VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

The Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies can supply raw materials, stock the finished goods and help in distributing all village industries products especially those connected with food-processing, textiles and other primary needs. They should be ever watchful of the interests of the villagers. In particular the following recommendations may be attended to.

(1) Rice mills should be disbanded and the engines could be used for irrigation purposes as has been already suggested

(2) Hullers used for polishing rice should be banned.

(3) People should be informed about the better nutritive value of whole unpolished rice and about the method of cooking it, along with practical demonstrations. Polishing of rice should be prohibited or its degree of polishing should be very strictly controlled, or par-boiling of paddy should be encouraged

(4) Where paddy husking is carried on an industrial scale, for business purposes, in the case of predominantly paddy growing areas, expensive equipment such as paddy separators, winnowners, etc. should be supplied on hire to a group of artisans through the Co-operative Society

(5) In view of the fact that the use of unpolished rice is to be advocated and popularised, the movement of paddy from one place to another will become necessary. In

order that the freight on the extra weight of paddy may not enhance the cost of rice, the freight charges on paddy should be suitably adjusted.

(6) In areas where the implements for dehussing paddy and polishing rice are the same, and both the processes are combined into one of pounding paddy, resulting in polished rice, dehussing implements, i.e. chakkis either of wood, stone or mud, should be introduced to restrict polishing. Such implements might be supplied, as also the equipments for other industries, through the District Demonstration Centres. The polishing of rice might be discouraged by imposing a tax on implements that polish rice and the degree of polishing obtained with these should be subject to supervision and control.

Paddy and other grains and seeds required by the village should be stocked in the village itself and only the surplus could be sent out and that only through the Co-operative Society.

## 2. Flour Grinding

(1) Good quality stones for hand chakkis and equipment for the bullock and water driven chakkis should be made available through the Demonstration Centres.

(2) The production and use of fine white flour, *maida*, should be banned.

(3) Flour mills grind large quantities of grain and hold their stocks of flour for long periods. This causes such flour to deteriorate. Therefore, such mills should be discouraged.

(4) Bullock-driven flour chakkis should be introduced where the necessary facilities exist.



( 5 ) Wherever water power is available from running water of a river or a canal, water driven flour chakkis can be set up.

( 6 ) Such chakkis might be owned co-operatively by the villagers as in the Punjab.

### 3. Oil-Pressing

The main difficulties in resuscitating the village *Ghani* are the following:—

The villages are practically denuded of the oil-seeds at the harvest time. To set this right only surplus oil-seeds should be allowed to go out of the village.

At some places the local *Ghanis* are so inefficient and small that it is well nigh impossible to make them a practical proposition. Even in a single province there are numerous types of *ghanis*. A detailed survey of the working of all such *ghanis* should be carried out. The working and advantages of improved *ghanis* should be demonstrated.

There is at present a great dearth of ghani carpenters even of the old type. Oilmen find it very hard to get their timely service. Their difficulty of getting equipment and spare parts is equally great. Training should be given to oilmen and carpenters in the technique of the improved *ghanis* at centres which will also provide the necessary equipment and spare parts.

Tahsil Co-operative Societies of oilmen or the Multi-purpose Village Societies will be the best medium for stocking oil-seeds, controlling the prices of seeds, oil and cake, eliminating adulteration, etc.

### 4. Gur Making

Gur making from palms is being done on a commercial

scale in Bengal and Madras where the industry has been well established

*Preservation and Planting of more palms:—* Felling of palm trees should be prohibited. Government owned waste land, unsuited for agricultural purposes, should be utilized for raising palms so as to be sufficient to replace cane gur and sugar by palm gur in due course. Also cultivation of palms on similar private lands and field bunds should be subsidised. Adequate supply of seedlings should be arranged and proper methods of cultivation should be taught.

*Co-operative Societies* — Co-operative Societies should take up the production and market the produce. They should also supply, where needed, equipment such as pans and centrifugal machines on hire

## 5. Bee-Keeping

Bee-keeping is doubly useful. It enables better fertilization of the crops giving the farmers a better yield, and at the same time provides honey, a nutritious article of diet.

The demonstration centres can keep a few colonies of honey bees and the work can be extended in other villages where bee pasturage is available. A preliminary survey of the area by an expert in bee-keeping will be necessary for this purpose. Once the centre is able to domesticate the bees, it can provide facilities for agriculturists to receive training and to obtain the necessary equipments at moderate rates.

## 6. Cotton and Wool

In areas where cotton can be grown adequate lands must be assigned for growing at least 12½ lbs. of lint per head of the population and its spinning and weaving should

be organised on the lines indicated, by the programme of work followed by the All-India Spinners' Association

Similarly, in sheep rearing areas production of woollen goods should be encouraged by aids to sheep breeding, grading of wool, etc.

## 7. Leather Tanning

Export of raw hides and skins from India are amongst the largest in the world. If we can convert all this raw material into leather ourselves we shall be providing occupation to millions of Harijans. Time being of the essence of tanning much finance is needed. Hence the work must be done co-operatively. Societies should purchase the hides, etc., and pay piece-work wages on various processes and market the goods either as finished leather or as manufactured articles.

(1) Leather is being tanned in all provinces, but all are not of equally good quality. Calcutta chrome and Madras "Gavi" which are considered to be of standard quality, are not attempted elsewhere. Other varieties are far inferior to these two. The reasons for this should be found out and the same standard of tanning should be introduced everywhere.

(2) Export of raw hides and skins should be discouraged by Government levying a very heavy duty on their export.

(3) A cart for carrying the carcasses should be supplied by Co-operative Societies at nominal cost to a group of *chamars*. At present, for want of such conveyance, the carcasses are dragged on the ground. It is estimated that this process reduces the value of the leather by about 50 per cent.

(4) The circumstances under which the industry is now carried on are very unhygienic and demands a complete reorganization. This can be brought about if proper

arrangements are made to take away from the dwelling places, for building drains, of water, etc., and if the processes, be carried out by simple machinery. If it involves a transformation of the scattered *chamar* families into a central tannery for a tahsil or district, the change may be for the better. Such tanneries may be owned and managed by Co-operative Societies only of the *chamars*.

(5) At present, there are a few selected places where leather manufactured goods are produced on a very big scale and distributed over the whole country. This system must be discouraged and local manufacture of practically all the leather goods, such as foot-wear, money purses, suitcases etc. should be encouraged, either the local manufacture may be subsidised or the imports taxed.

Subsidies should be given to individual contractors or Co-operative Societies for the preparation of manure from blood, flesh and bones from the carcasses. The subsidy should be in proportion to the output of manure.

(6) Glue, guts, brushes, and other by-products can also be prepared by these societies. The horn industry can be profitably introduced among *chamar* families. It should be encouraged by subsidy for some time and by the purchase of the finished products by the government for its use. The necessary equipment should, of course, be supplied on hire.

### 8. Soap-Making

A survey of deposits of *sajji matti* should be carried out. And wherever such deposits of *sajji matti* are found, soap makers should be allowed to collect them without any tax or royalty being demanded of them. Incidentally, it may be observed, that the removal of this deposit improves the

quality of the land. Caustic lye prepared from Saju matti and non-edible oils should be utilized for soap manufacture in villages

### 9. Lighting

The non-edible oils as neem, karanja, candlo nut, pardi, mahua, rayan, etc., which are very little used at present, should be utilized also for lighting purposes. Every effort should be directed towards making the villages self-sufficient in lighting

Vegetable oil lamps, like the "Magandipa" devised by the A. I. V. I. A, can be distributed from the demonstration centres along with other equipments, and the local artisans should also be encouraged to produce them

### 10. Paper Making

(1) The Provincial Governments may start handmade paper industry in the jails where the required raw materials are available in the vicinity. For this purpose a survey of the local raw materials needed for paper making should be carried out by an expert.

(2) All the chemicals required for paper making should be made available by Co-operative Societies to the handmade paper production centres at controlled rates.

(3) One central workshop should be maintained, in common with other industries for making the required machinery such as beater, callender, moulds, screw press, envelopes making machine, etc.

Paper makers should be supplied with the latest type of equipments such as hollander beater, callender machine, screw press, etc, either on hire or on the hire-purchase system through the Co-operative Societies. These societies may

arrangements are made at a site a little away from the village dwelling places, for building sheds, pits, drainage, supply of water, etc., and if the processes, which are unhygienic, be carried out by simple machinery. If this involves a transformation of the scattered *chaman* families into a central tannery for a tahsil or district, the change may be for the better. Such tanneries may be owned and managed by Co-operative Societies only of the *chamans*.

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also supply pulp where such pulp calls for power-driven machinery for its making

(4) Such raw materials as office records, waste paper and grasses available in the government forests useful for paper making, which are auctioned at present to the highest bidder, should be reserved for hand-made paper producing centres and should be supplied to them through their co-operative societies at moderate rates. Similarly, the finished products prepared by the centres should be purchased by the Government for their stationery and office record purposes, through the Co-operative Societies at such prices as will leave the paper makers in a position to maintain a reasonable standard of life

(5) Training—The required expert staff for hand made paper producing centres can be trained at the Provincial Training Centres.

(6) Priority should be obtained from the railways for the transport of hand-made paper and its equipments. Hand made paper should be exempted from terminal and octroi duties.

## **11 Pottery**

(1) The first requisite of the pottery industry is the analysis of the available clay in the province. This should be undertaken by the Government

(2) Clay mixing is an art requiring considerable knowledge of chemistry. Hence it should be done in a central place like a Co-operative Society, or a jail, and the mixed clay should be distributed to individual potters. Alternatively, the existing potters should be taught the art of clay mixing if possible, by giving them a set of formulas for particular types of clay.



(3) As in the case of other industries, the Co-operative Societies can be the agency for the distribution of clay as well as the improved potters' wheel on hire.

(4) The glazing and firing of particular types of pots will have to be done again co-operatively. Both the processes of clay mixing and firing and glazing should be done on a service basis co-operatively by the potters themselves. Pots, which do not require very high temperature firing, and which are ordinarily done at present in the villages by groups of potters, can be fired better by introducing improved furnaces in place of temporary ones. Properly constructed furnaces will reduce the consumption of fuel.

7. The big furnaces required for brick-tiles-firing should be co-operatively organized. The shape and strength of bricks and tiles should be improved.

(5) Facilities should be provided for potters to receive short term training in all the processes, such as clay-mixing and improved modelling, firing and glazing, at some convenient place.

## 12. Sanitation and Manure

(1) What forms should the latrines take in the villages should be found out after alternative methods have been tried out. It may be that more than one type may be found suitable and necessary. Experiments must be made in regard to types of latrines, etc., to keep the villages in a sanitary condition. Bore-hole urinals should be installed in suitable places in the villages.

(2) Subsidies should be given to individual contractors for converting human excreta and all the dirt of the village into compost manure. The subsidy being proportionate to

the amount of manure produced should be such as to attract individuals to this job. Unless it is made a profitable business proposition, it is not likely to be attractive. The grant or subsidy, at least for some years, is essential to make it attractive.

(3) The custom of housing cattle inside the village and often in the dwelling places themselves, requires attention from the point of view of village sanitation. Though this is a long-term problem, the sanitation of the village is difficult to maintain without proper provision for stables and mangers.

Wherever new extension of a town or village has to be made, the cattle housing should be provided for in a place a little away from the dwellings. Sanitation of the village is one of the main considerations that weigh with some who advocate common dairies of the villages, instead of individually owned and kept cattle.

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## CHAPTER VI

### DEMOCRACY

India was originally a republic of villages, and each village was a self-governing unit. It has developed certain ideas of state, based on the types of personalities commonly found in society.

All activities in human society present two points of view, the long range view and the short range view. Many of us are not capable of taking a long term view because it means working for years before the fruit of one's labours can be seen or obtained and men do not like to wait. We are all inclined to take a short term view, we want to eat, drink and be merry. Ninety-nine out of hundred people take this short term view. But there are certain matters which have got to be done for the benefit of the whole society and which call for a long range view. This is what a democracy arranges for. We require men with long range view to be at the head of Government if Government is to succeed and the well being of the majority is to be achieved. People who take a short range view are a danger to society, if they be at the head of Government. They will promote wars by their short sighted policy.

Judged from this view point, England and America are anything but democracies. Those countries are under absolute dictatorships. When these countries were faced with the grave danger of war, what was the form of Government that prevailed, democracy or dictatorship? Bare faced dictatorship came into being in those countries. That was not

merely a coincidence; it was bound to happen. These countries have been using centralised methods of production which means central control and regimentation, which ultimately leads to dictatorship. We cannot have dictatorship in economics and at the same time, democracy in politics. Such claims to democracy are merely smoke-screens. Democracy in economics must be based on decentralized production in villages on individual basis.

Of course, irrigation, roads and such large projects will have to be undertaken and for that purpose you must select from society people who have a long range view. Therefore all ministers and all government officials should be persons with long range view. If they talk in terms of money, "will it pay"? then they are not people of the right sort to hold the present responsible posts. In the long view "will it pay?" will not be the criterion. "Does it answer the purpose of the people" is the question that should be asked. Government is not a commercial institution. It is not an institution for making money or producing bureaucrats. Government is there to serve the people. If it serves the needs of the people it does not matter what such service costs. It has got to be rendered. That is the fundamental principle that we have got to remember. Here is a big difference between private economy and public finance in this that public finance takes a long range view. While planning for democracy, every citizen is to be made conscious of the part he has to play in the whole scheme.

### **The Personnel**

One of the primary necessities for doing this is that there should be no "self" in those in charge. If "self" be there, they will exploit the labour of the millions. That is the danger, and therefore it is that in regard to Congress

Ministries we want to cut down very many things. The last ministry went down to a salary of Rs. 500/- a month. Now their standards have increased, and accordingly the salaries have been increased. That means that "self" has come in. There is danger here. We have to accept village standards. We are not to live in palaces. There are many palaces in cities, where wealthy people are living, but the villages have no palaces.

I had an occasion to meet a missionary in a village about five or six miles from a town. He was living in a big palatial house, like the houses of some of our ministers, beautifully furnished. In that jungle of a place he had electricity, pumps for the well, flush out lavatories and so many other modern facilities. He had a farm of about three hundred acres of land.

About half a mile from the house he had built small mud huts for model families to establish themselves, with a poultry run and a little land attached to each hut to cultivate. The missionary said to me, "We are spending a lot of money here, but we feel that we are not very effective in the villages. We are unable to get at them. Can you give me a *mantra* for it?" I said, "The *mantra* is very simple. You set fire to this palatial house. That is the *mantra*. You are coming from Western countries and you do not know the conditions that obtain in India. You always think in terms of money, and prestige it brings. The villagers respect us in this clothing. If we have two more patches in our clothes, they respect us all the more. If we do away with the shirt, they follow us, and if we have a *dhoti* high up as a loin cloth, they prostrate before us! That is the standard of values in our country. You missionaries, who come here, do not understand this position. Therefore, if you

want to serve our people, you have to get rid of this big palace which is associated with exploitation. It creates suspicion and instils fear in the villagers. If you have built these mud huts for the villager at a cost of Rs. 250/-each, you must build huts for yourself at a cost of Rs. 125/-, if you want to serve the villagers. If you do that they will come and listen to you as they would realise you have no "self" in you. That is the secret of it. Ours is not a barbarian country. We have got a culture of values not based on money. We have got our "Brahminical standards". It is not the sacred thread that is the symbol of Brahminic culture. There may be I. C. S officers earning thousands of rupees as salary, with their sacred threads on but they are all *mlechas*. We have got a standard of Brahminical values. That is the secret of the Mahatma's greatness. If Mahatma Gandhi goes to America, crowds will go to see him; but they will not go in the same spirit as the crowds gather in India. Our people have faith in Gandhi because he is a man without property, without any "self" in him". That is what will bring popular ministries real power. That is what will restore the confidence of the people. If you put this plan before them, they will readily take it. You do not require much money for it.

All that is required is to transform ourselves and get into this way of life. That alone will bring us *swaraj*, economic *swaraj*. In that *swaraj* everyone will have enough to eat.

First of all, in a poverty stricken land, every one must have food and clothing. That is why we should approach the problem from an agricultural point of view. It is not a question of harnessing the patriotism of the people. It is a question of harnessing every man. Ultimately we have to solve the problem of food and clothing to every one.

## World Reactions

That is the only way of ensuring peace in the world. We have a tremendous hold over China, not because we are manufacturers of atom bombs, but because there are ties between this country and China created by Lord Buddha. That is the sort of culture that we want. We want to be a world power. If so we must start with this cultural value, and we must plan from the villages upwards. That is the only way of solving not only our own problems but those of the whole world. Those at the helm of affairs should forsake their "self", and forsake their all. They must then put this plan into action for the people. That is the real contribution they can make to our country.

## Government Opposition

Democratic government based on representatives requires an opposition to direct its working. The water in a river is kept to its course by the banks. If the banks are of rock it is best. If not the banks get eroded and the river silts and shifts its course. Hence there can be no competition between the banks and the water for the bed of the river.

Similarly the director and the directed cannot be competitors. There should be co-operation and not competition.

As the waters of a river are kept in their course best by its rocky banks, so also the Government of a country has to be directed by forces which lie outside the official sector of the Government. Great Britain prides itself on possessing the "Mother of Parliament". The method prevailing there is to maintain, at Government cost, "His Majesty's Opposition" to keep the Ministers within bounds by directing the flood light of public criticism on the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government. British Parliament

is a veritable arena where many a mortal combat between political knights take place. The discomfited knight yields place to the victor. The occupants of the opposition benches today may be the proud occupants of the Treasury Benches tomorrow according to the fortunes of Parliamentary Debate. This is the function of the opposition in the British Parliamentary System. It is an outcome of the competitive economy projected into the political sphere.

The composition of the cabinet itself reflects the structure of imperialism in the economic field. Centralised industries need to gather the raw materials from the four corners of the world and send back their finished products to markets in the uttermost parts of the globe. This necessitates wide-spread use of money and transport and control of political power. To achieve this Foreign Affairs, Finance and Army, Navy and Air Force become essentials. Hence these have secured coveted status in the British Cabinet.

Both competition and imperialism have their roots in violence.

Our country has taken up the reins of Government. If we desire to pursue non-violence, what shall be the form of our Government? Our Government also will need a corrective force to perform the functions of an "Opposition". But we want an economy based on co-operation and not one on competition. The "Opposition" members in our economy will not be looking forward to occupying the Treasury Benches one day, should the fortunes of debate go against those in the saddle at the time. Personal ambition can have no place in an economy of non-violence and co-operation. What we should aim at is not to replace the Ministers, but to hold up models that they should follow. The constructive workers should direct them



into proper channels by the beacon light of their example. This is a great responsibility that would devolve upon the constructive workers in a non-violent economy.

A well organised body of constructive workers will be needed to provide this directive force. Their service to the people will be their sanction and the merit of their work will be their charter. The Ministers will draw their inspiration from such a body which will advise and guide the secular Government. To be able to discharge this function the constructive workers forming such a body will have to be drawn from men of renunciation, whose one aim and ambition is the service of the people.

In such a political make-up the Cabinet will handle portfolios that will be essential to an economy of self-sufficiency. The major portfolios will be Agriculture, Land-Development-Antierosion, reclamation, fertilisation-Irrigation, River Controls, Forests, Village and Cottage Industries, Minerals and Heavy Industries, Health, Education and Home Affairs. It is not imperative in such a set-up to give Foreign Affairs, Finance and Defence cabinet rank, however important these departments may be.

In a political structure of this nature the body of constructive workers will form the bulwark of safety for the people against exploitation. A Government run on this basis will give the needed emphasis to the affairs of the people and ensure their welfare bringing in Swaraj to the masses.

"Nationalisation" presupposes that real power rests with the people, i. e., with the masses. There should be in the first place, a wide foundation of experience in the management of our affairs. This has to be obtained by the

villagers looking after their common needs through well organized panchayats. From such experienced men the districts will draw their administrators and these will also supply the requirements of the province in regard to public men and legislation. Such well-based and properly conducted provincial administration will be able to keep under control the Central Government and make it function in the interests of the villagers.

When the Government of the land is in the hands of such tried patriots who will be trusted to hold the interests of the millions as their first care, then alone can we claim to have a National Government and "Nationalisation" will then ensure that the interests of the masses will be taken care of.

In the absence of such a village based and controlled Central Government, "Nationalisation" may lead to the greater exploitation of the "have nots" by the "haves".

For instance, there has been a lot of talk recently about "Nationalising" the Airways. These airways, at present, are not within the reach of the villagers. They do not need them nor are they likely to use them. As it is, at the present time, the "haves" own them and use them. So Government control now will mean the Government will spend its money and thought in making "the Airways" easily available to the "haves" while other "haves" will provide the service. Aerodromes may have to be constructed and various roads, etc, provided. For this these private bodies would like to exploit the Government resources and obtain their assistance under the plea of Government control or "Nationalisation". The funds available to the Government should be earmarked for the provision of facilities for the masses and hence we

cannot divert them for the betterment of Airways. Let private enterprises go on as they have done. Some "Haves" will exploit other "Haves", and later on when village based National Government comes into existence we shall have time enough to consider "Nationalisation" of such services.

## CHAPTER VII

### NATIONAL INDUSTRIES

We come to the question of organisation and method to be followed by industries. We have to bear in mind two main principles in economics. These are, concentration of wealth and distribution of wealth.

Centralised industries generally act like centrifugal machines. These concentrate wealth in a few hands. Concentration may be either of wealth or of power. The decentralised industries have the natural tendency of distributing wealth. Therefore, if we do not want, in our society, concentration of wealth, then we must take out the centralised industries. Since what we want is distribution of wealth especially in a poor country like India, we must decentralise the industries.

There is another way of doing it. Russia has done it. They say that they will produce wealth in a concentrated form and then distribute it through government. The danger there lies in the concentration of power, and not in the concentration of wealth, as in our country. When wealth has been produced the people who have to redistribute it have the power in their hands. Therefore, whether it is concentration of power or concentration of wealth, both are evils. In Russia there is concentration of power, as against concentration of wealth in America and England. India is a poor country where we have got to produce wealth, and in the process of production of wealth we have to distribute

it So, where we want to produce consumption goods, we should put centralised method of production out of court completely.

### Place of Centralised Industries

There should be centralised industries only where they can be in the hands of people who will not have any profit motives or who will not concentrate the wealth. We shall have to sterilise the centralised industries of their power of concentrating wealth. How shall we do that? It must be on a service basis. Electricity, transport, communications post and telegraphs, roads, all these must be on a service basis and must be run by government composed of selfless workers. If we want motor cars or aeroplanes, they must be produced by government. It may be said that such industries, as are run by government, are very often wasteful. We must condone a certain amount of waste. Concentration of wealth is much more wasteful. All these wars are the result of concentration of wealth and power consequent on centralisation of industries. Look at the huge amount of wealth that has been wasted during the last few years.

If we must have a centralised industry, we can have it only where we cannot help it. It is just like a poison. Even poison is sometimes good. For example, you take quinine. It is a good thing when you take in limited quantities and as prescribed by a doctor. You put a red label to the effect that it is a poison, and you take it in small doses. If you want to have a centralised industry that is a poison for the nation, you may have it with a red label, and take it in small doses as prescribed by the doctor! Otherwise there is danger. Centralised industries are in their very nature anti-social. Therefore, we have got to limit their sphere. How do we limit it? Limit it to cases where society requires

their function and the industry itself is of the nature of a monopoly. Take for example, water-supply. We should let government arrange for water-supply. We have to allocate to government things which require a long-range view.

### Costs and Profits

There are people who talk in terms of cost. They say centralised industries are good because things can be produced cheap. It is not always so. Centralised industries can be used with advantage in the case of public utility concerns, such as Railways, Posts and Telegraphs, Electricity supply, Irrigation, which are by nature monopolistic, there must not be any profit motive, but they should be run on a service basis. When the State undertakes these enterprises the profit motive is eliminated, which an individual has uppermost in his mind.

Private individuals are actuated by profit motive. Higher the cost, lower the profit, and lower the cost, higher the profit. This means we cut down cost in centralised industry. The easiest way to do so is to cut down wages, purchase raw materials at a cheaper price and effect other economic savings in overhead charges. Profit is the main motive power. When we are cutting down wages and the raw materials are purchased cheap, then we make one man who organises the industry rich and the other people poor. Thus unequal distribution of wealth sets in.

This is not so with village industries. There is no question of profit, although prices may be higher. There is a fair return for everybody. This is why we need not worry even though prices under village industries are high and prices under centralised industries are low. All we want to do is to prevent unequal distribution of wealth.

### Price Control

It is wrong to treat the large-scale and small-scale industries in the same way in regard to price control. We must understand the nature of the industry before we begin to place controls. Controls are not desirable in every sphere. Where an industry is anti-social it should not be a centralised industry. Thus, the element of being anti-social determines whether the industry should or should not be a large-scale industry.

As observed earlier, centralised industries are good where there are natural monopolies and where much capital is required. For instance coal mines, railways and ventures of that type require large capital, big labour force-everything on a vast scale and such industries should not be left to private individuals but should be managed by the State.

### Democracy in Industries

Textile-mills are anti-democratic because there are thousands of people working under a boss who is an autocrat within his little sphere-the Mill. His word is law, he is the Czar whose word must be obeyed. There should not be a place in democracy for such anti-social elements. Democracy must be pure everywhere. From this political aspect also centralised industries are an evil.

We want a society based on co-operation. Competition means jungle law. We do not want it in our country. Our aim is to bring co-operation, ban competition and we cannot ban competition merely by saying that we shall regulate prices.

Just as a doctor prescribes poison in small doses to cure his patients after careful examination, so also we have got to carefully examine each industry and see whether centralisation is good or bad.

When we reject centralisation we do not object to the use of machinery. What we desire is that man should not become the slave of the machine. When man loses control over the machine, we have violence manifesting itself.

### Violence and Peace

In text-books on Economics we read so much about the laws of supply and demand, but in the actual world we do not find anything like that especially in a competitive regime. A machine must be worked to its economic productive capacity. To take a concrete example, suppose there is a shoe-making factory. There is a demand for 300 pairs of shoes but the economic productivity of the factory is 500 pairs of shoes. This means that the cost of production to be the lowest, 500 pairs of shoes must be produced, whether there is a demand for them or not. Because the factory owner is concerned with profits, he will not care for anything else but to see that the cost of production is the lowest per pair of shoes. He will ignore the demand side and produce 500 pairs because the cost of production would be reduced to the minimum and then he will try to find a market outside. Thus man is governed by the speed of the machine and not by the demand. Wars are thus started for capturing markets, creating customers for the surplus products. Production takes place first and demand is then created at the point of the bayonet. It is, therefore, evident that centralised industry is the root cause of wars. It is necessary, therefore, to put a rational limit on the use of centralised industries.

In certain industries like tanning there are some processes which require large-scale methods to be employed. In such cases by all means we may use them, but not under private management. If chrome tanning is necessary it must



be done under multipurpose co-operative societies on the basis of supplying leather at cost price to the shoemaker.

In the same way there may be so many functions which can be undertaken on individualistic or small-scale basis. For instance, kiln with 1,600° heat cannot be had without much capital and electric power—a centralised process. We may use electric power and all other methods functionally, but not for profit. Let it not be a handle to exploit society.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS

As has been observed all activities in human society present two view points-the long-range view and the short range view. The individual is generally obsessed with the immediate benefit he gets. He is not much interested in a programme of work that will bear fruit after his time. He would be prepared to be satisfied with lower return in the near future than to work for an end that will fructify much later. Therefore it becomes necessary, in the interests of the whole social group, to detail out certain individuals to attend to the dictates of the long range interests. This is the function of a National Government.

Again, certain necessary functions cannot be performed within the limits of the resources available to the common citizen. Such functions also fall to the government whose resources of men and material are immense. Research, experimentation and dissemination of information are such functions which an individual farmer or artisan cannot undertake.

All the zeal, talent and resources of the State and the public that have up to the present been directed towards pushing ahead factory products, should now be rechannelled into a drive for village sufficiency based on village industries. With determined effort all the handicaps from which villagers suffer at present should be removed as soon as possible.

## **Irrigation**

The need for providing irrigation facilities to all the villages cannot be emphasised too greatly. This is the foundation upon which agriculture depends for its progress, in the absence of which farming becomes a pure gamble. A drive for sinking wells, enlarging and dredging tanks, building canals has to be launched. The power engines used in rice and flour mills now can be acquired by the governments to pump up water from tube wells. No proper manuring can be done without water facilities, as manure in the absence of water is harmful.

## **Land Management**

We have to increase the extent and quality of soil under cultivation. The quality of the soil should be maintained by checking erosion and water logging by means of proper damage, embankments, contour bunding etc. In the final analysis the soil is the fountain head from which springs all nourishment for men and cattle in the form of corn and fodder. If the quality of the soil is reduced the food produced upon it will be of poor quality and consequently the health of the people will suffer. This is why nutrition experts connect up health with agriculture.

In Bihar and other places former food crops like rice have been made to yield place to commercial crops-sugarcane, tobacco and long staple cotton-by using the price mechanism. Similarly, in Malabar large tracts of rice lands have been converted into coconut groves. These coconuts are sold to oilmills and the oil is used in preparing soap. The old occupants of rice fields no longer get their own rice hand-pounded but depend on polished rice from Brazil and suffer from malnutrition consequently. It is the duty of the Government

to see that proper use is made of the land to produce primary necessities first. If there be any surplus land available after providing food and clothing, such lands may be used for commercial purposes. The above cited instances show criminal dereliction of duty of Government in that in effect rice lands have been converted into soap lands while people are facing starvation.

The use of lands should be subject to a license which will be given after considering the products to be raised according to a well laid out plan.

### **Research**

All research in agriculture should be directed towards improving food crops as well as raw materials for village industries rather than encourage the growth of money crops, like tobacco, and raw materials for factories, like thick rind sugarcane and long staple cotton.

### **Freights and Priorities**

At present priority and discriminative freight rates are granted to factory materials. Village industries articles such as hand-made paper, equipment for village industries, vegetable oil lamps, etc., are not given a look in on the railways. This causes bottle-necks in the industries concerned. This policy of the railways had played no small part in checking the progress and spread of village industries, which promised to flourish under the conditions prevailing during the war. As in all other matters, the policy in this too should be changed in favour of village producers. Railway priority for the transport of goods and equipment of village industries should be granted. Village-made articles must be exempted from impositions such as terminal taxes, municipal duties, etc.

### **Cattle-breeding**

The government should undertake cattle-breeding farms on much wider scale. In every province where there are special breeds suited to the place, these should be preserved and improved. Where necessary the maintenance of stud bulls may be subsidised. Generally the work may be done on lines followed by the Goseva Sangh, Wardha, Central Provinces.

### **Communications, Roads etc**

All roads meant for motor traffic in villages should be tarred and the cost must be borne by the motor owners. The licence and taxes on motor vehicles and on petrol should be so regulated as to make motor owners bear the entire cost to Government for the construction and the maintenance of such roads. Motor vehicles should not be allowed, except with special permit, on untarred roads and then only with a speed limit of 5 miles per hour.

The government will have to radically revise their policy of maintaining forests. Forest management should be guided, not by considerations of revenue but by the needs of the people. Forest produce such as timber, lac etc, should be supplied in useable form. The wood should be seasoned in the forests. Forest planning must be based on the requirements of the villagers around. Forests should be divided into two main classes: (1) those supplying timber to be planned from the long range point of view, and (2) those supplying fuel and grasses, to be made available to the public either free of cost or at nominal rates. There are village industries such as palm gur, paper making, pottery, etc, which can flourish only if fuel or grass be supplied to them at cheap rates.

### Training Centres

There should be Training Centres, preferably on linguistic basis, to carry on the following functions:-

(1) To carry on research in conjunction with the district demonstration centres in the technique and process of village industries of the province (2) To prepare literature on village industries in the local languages (3) To hold village industries exhibitions. (4) To run a workshop for the supply of such tools and implements as bullock driven flour chakkis, paddy separators, sugar centrifugal machines, beater, digester, calender, screw press, filter press, etc which cannot be manufactured in the district centres (5) To train Gram Sevaks, staff for the district demonstration centres as well as for co-operative societies.

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## CHAPTER IX

### EDUCATION FOR LIFE

In the last analysis we are led to the conclusion that all problems radiate from education. We can solve our difficulties only by educating the people to view life from a common standpoint. Education is a master key that gives admission into all departments that make up life.

#### Meaning of Education

If education is to fit us for life - to make us better citizens, better husbands and better fathers-it has to be a continuous process from the cradle to the grave. Through all the changing scenes of life we ought to be able to pass with the least shock. If, on the other hand, education taught us only certain tricks which we could perform we should be completely at sea when a different set of circumstances confronted us. Education need not cramp our minds with facts and figures but it should give us an attitude towards life.

An educational system has to have a philosophy behind it and its purpose should be to elicit the best in an individual. Therefore, the undertaking of education is a grave responsibility fraught with many dangers and we cannot launch out lightly upon any scheme without proper preparation and thought.

Unfortunately, the system of spreading the art of reading and writing has been often identified with education. Nothing can be more grotesque. Reading and writing are means of acquiring culture but they are not the only means nor are they the most important means.

### Education with a Purpose .

In most countries, at present, education has a definite purpose or goal. In capitalistic countries, the captains of industry look upon it as a nursery for their future executives and administrators. In socialist countries, they harness it to increase material production. In militaristic nations, education means a creation of a narrow patriotism.

### The Oriental Method .

In our own country, the system of education followed in the past was a training ground for life. A student chose his master and lived his everyday life under his master's watchful eye and imbibed the spirit of his *guru* . This was the case, not merely with spiritual training, but, in every walk of life. The *guru* himself did not look upon teaching as a profession any more than a father looks upon his parental duties as a profession. The *guru* led his own life from which emanated his outlook on life and his disciple gleaned what he could from his practice. Jesus, when he chose his disciples said "follow me" and he did not give them a list of text books to read. They had to follow in their master's footsteps. That is our system of education.

### True Economic Value

The close contact of Western commerce has enshrined gold amongst us. Our cultural values have yielded place to money values. We have begun to think in terms of gold and not in terms of humanity. The Brahmanical cultural standards have gone and the Baniya civilization of the West has crept in. The Brahmin was valued and respected not because of his possession but because of the service he was to render to society without regard to the return he gets. No educational system which does not place first things first



is worthy of our attention. Any attempt to educate the masses must include inculcation of true standards of financial, social and economic value above all things.

### Varied aspects of life

Man is a complex being; we cannot divide him up into water-tight compartments and develop him in stages. Education which attends only to the intellectual development leaving aside the physical, moral and spiritual aspects is directed towards the production of monstrosities. If our aim is a true education we have to attend to all faculties at one and the same time. We have to develop a person physically, socially, mentally and spiritually. He has to learn an occupation, he has to learn how to live as a member of a community, he has to know how to evaluate men and matters. Unless all these are attempted we can have no education worth the name.

There is not a single action of ours that does not leave its indelible mark on us. Our work, our play, our pastime and our rest all have to be consciously planned out if the reactions have to be healthy socially. Training for work takes care of the major part of a worker's life. We spend most of our time in our economic activity. If it is so arranged that it develops our faculties and enriches our life in the process of producing goods, to that extent the nation will be the better for it. Proper work will not wear out a nation but build it. The function of work should be to reduce to practice our ideal of life. Pure religion, which begins and ends with ceremonial worship, is superficial. If religion does not affect every act of ours, every moment of our life, it is futile. We have seen by our analysis of work, in the chapter on Work, the highly important role that work plays in developing the individual and the race. If

work can be so potent a force in developing the adult we can well harness it to develop the child

We have to concentrate our efforts on the villages. University education can go overboard for a time without damaging the nation. As it is we are top-heavy, we have many more graduates than we need. These have also created a problem of unemployment as they are not products of the type of education we need. Otherwise, there would be no difficulty in absorbing them. Our end must be to make our villagers more useful and efficient. It is not necessary to load them with much outside information. Radio and talkies though they may be helpful, cannot be the main source of rural education. The amount spent on them is disproportionately high. The work must be an evolution from within the village and not an imposition from outside the community. Anything from outside will require to be propped up by artificial means, but that which comes from within will develop true culture which will bind man to man, village to village and ultimately the country itself as one whole.

We need not place too much emphasis on the organization to be brought into existence. When we pin our faith on organizations, however important they may be in themselves, we often lose sight of the personal influence, and the organization tends to become expensive and wooden. Centralization of education, as in other spheres, leads to too much control from those at a distance. Centralization of education will lead to hide-bound methods and standardization which are fatal to true education. It is much better for the village teacher to work under the eyes of his neighbours. Therefore, it would seem better if each village can be made to finance its own education by the old method of endowing lands to a *Mandir* dedicated to education. If such a system can have

the advantage of inspection and advice from the centre, 'it ought to answer our purpose well, as the management itself will be amenable to local public opinion. As it is, the teacher has to satisfy the inspector once a year or so and, after such inspection is over, he relaxes. This does not make for progress, much less for steady work. Every village school should be the centre of culture and the point of contact with the outside world. The only danger in this conception is that the teacher may get into the habit of looking upon his part in the village as one of promoting social spirit and may neglect his main duty to the younger generation. This social aspect is only a bye-product, it is not the end of a school. Let us place our faith in human nature and in ourselves and go ahead keeping our load star in sight. We may differ in details, but we shall reach our goal of developing true culture, reliable standards of value and attain unity in spite of our apparent diversity.

7. **the suggested Scheme.**

Of late there has been a good deal of discussion as to the line which true education should take. Gandhiji suggests education should be made self-supporting. He writes "By education I mean an allround drawing out of the best in child and man—body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education. I would, therefore, begin with the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus, every school can be made self-supporting, the condition being that the State takes over the manufactures of these schools.

"I hold that the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education.

Only every handicraft has to be taught not merely mechanically, as is done to-day, but scientifically, *i. e.* the child should know the why and the wherefore of every process. I am not writing this without some confidence, because it has the backing of experience. This method is being adopted more or less completely wherever spinning is being taught to workers. I have myself taught sandal-making and even spinning on these lines with good results. This method does not exclude a knowledge of history and geography. But I find that this is best taught by transmitting such general information by word of mouth. One imparts ten times as much in this manner as by reading and writing. The signs of the alphabet may be taught later when he has somewhat developed his or her tastes. This is a revolutionary proposal but it saves immense labour and enables a student to acquire in one year what he may take much longer to learn. This means all-round economy. Of course the pupil learns mathematics whilst he is learning his handicraft.

"I attach the greatest importance to primary education which according to my conception should be equal to the present matriculation less English. If all the collegians were all of a sudden to forget their knowledge, the loss sustained by the sudden lapse of the memory of say a few lacs of collegians would be as nothing compared to the loss that the nation has sustained and is sustaining through the ocean of darkness that surrounds three hundred millions. The measure of illiteracy is no adequate measure of the prevailing ignorance among the millions of villagers".

The education of children in the early stages can never be self-supporting. The articles they may produce will not command any exchange value. If the State is to take them over that will only be another way of meeting the

loss and we shall be deceiving ourselves that education is self-supporting. What Gandhiji means by self-supporting is not that each year of the child must be paid for by the products that the child makes in that year. This is too narrow a financial viewpoint and it can never be true. What is meant is a much wider value, not in terms of money only but in terms of future services rendered by the child as a well-trained citizen. At present, frequently the drilling in the three Rs that a child gets in a village is so feeble that after a few years it lapses into illiteracy again and the time and money spent on the child become a sheer waste in course of time. But if it had been properly spent, the production of the class, though it may not pay for itself each year, in the course of the seven year's schooling, the aggregate production of the class, ought to cover the amount spent on the salary of the teacher. In the first two years there will be losses, in the next three years it may just balance and the last two years, if the child had been properly trained, ought to show a profit sufficient to cover the losses of the first two years. Apart from this, as has already been pointed out, the training of a good citizen more than compensates any capital expense incurred by the State. When the child is taught crafts which are in local demand such as spinning, dyeing, weaving, tailoring, mat and basket-making, pottery, shoe-making, carpentry, smithy, brass and metal working, paper-making, gur production, oil-pressing, bee-keeping etc., the problem of marketing will not be great. Even the apprentice of an artisan does not pay for himself from the very start. His training is bound to result in a loss for sometime. After the initial stages, he may produce something worthwhile. Thence onwards he may pay his training through. To meet such early training the Government has to find the funds or the people will have to set aside certain

assets like lands earmarked for the purpose. This was done formerly until the British system of taxation dis-established the village schools. But education of the young must remain a duty of the State. As we are situated at present, our problem is a politically created financial problem and is not natural. The solution lies in correcting it politically and not accepting it as inevitable. The teacher should himself be a well-trained person who may have to be paid adequately say Rs. 25/- as a start. The school hours and terms should be related to the village calendar. There may be no classes during harvest seasons or during periods when a great deal of work has to be done on the fields.

### General outline of the Plan.

The Wardha or Basic scheme, as this new plan has come to be known, recommends a course of seven years' compulsory basic education for boys and girls from the age seven to fourteen. The medium of instruction is to be a craft like spinning, around which all subjects are taught. The everyday life of the child and the correlation of the craft, the physical and social environment of the child afford points of co-ordination for all departments of knowledge. The standard aimed at is the present matriculation without English. There will be no effort to teach writing until the child has learnt drawing. Reading will be taught first. After the age of twelve, the pupil may be allowed to choose a craft as a vocation. It does not aim at turning out expert workmen at the age of fourteen but, the pupil will have acquired sufficient training to enter a vocation in which he will do his talents justice.

The central idea of this scheme is that intellectual development must be attained through vocational training.

The present system emphasizes general education and bases vocational training on it. Therefore, when intellectual training comes first, we, in a way, tie the hands and feet of the child and he becomes impractical. No amount of the latter training will ever restore his limbs paralysed in childhood. Instruction, without experience to base it on, becomes a pure memory training exercise. It does not develop any initiative or personality.

### **Examination**

The brunt of examinations will be borne by the teaching staff and not by the pupils under this scheme. As the pupil's life is to be controlled by the teacher for 24 hours of the day, the teacher becomes knit together with the home of every child and so with the village. The work of the teacher will be reflected in the condition of the homes and of the village.

### **Women's part:**

We have to follow the natural physical development of the child and follow it mentally, morally and spiritually. The child takes interest in form, colour and movement and then tries to understand the reason why things are what they are. Then he will experiment to see if he cannot make things what he wants them to be. Thus he advances from play to investigation and then to creation. Our educational system has to cater for these three stages of growth if we plan on eliciting the best in each child. To do this, the teacher ought to be fully qualified to enter into the spirit of the child and share it with him. By temperament and natural endowment, women, generally speaking, are better able to understand children of the first stage. The system in India suffers in no small measure by the lack of education among women. The mothers are not qualified to train the child

nor can we get properly educated young women to enter the schools as teachers. It seems to me if we are to reform the schools, the first step is the education of girls and young women, who are the natural custodians of the generations to come. Unless we begin there, any amount of planning and scheming by mere man will be in vain as he only comes in after the impressionable age of the child has been lost. Every village school, handling children under eight, must be in the hands of women. One can almost say that with rare exceptions no man teacher should be employed in such schools

In the second stage of development of the child, we need persons who will stimulate the thinking of the pupils and explain the why and wherefore of phenomena. I had the opportunity of visiting a school in New York State run by the Federation of Labour Unions. In that school the whole community lived together and the children took part in the supply of food products and all other domestic matters. They had their own dairy; one of the teachers was in charge and a few boys helped him. I attended an "economic class" of pupils of about eleven years of age. The subject for the day was "Buying of a cow". The class was taken charge of by a boy of about ten, the teacher sat in a back row with me. The lad in charge (we shall call him Henry) described to the class what his experience was when he went with the teacher (Bill) in charge of the Dairy to an adjoining market to buy a cow. This is how the class went on: "Bill and I went to an auction to buy a cow because we do not get enough milk from our cows for us all". One of the pupils asked what an "Auction" was. The other explained "An auction is a shop where they had no fixed prices. The shopman brought out an article and the persons who wanted it



told him what they would pay for it and the shopman gave it to the one who 'bid' highest". Then followed an explanation what a 'bid' was. Then another pupil asked why different persons 'bid' different prices. Henry replied "the cow they bought started at 75 dollars and was 'knocked down' at 120 dollars for Bill". After the explanation of "knocked down" he said that the first man suggested paying 75 dollars and others went on increasing the price till Bill bid 120 dollars. After that nobody came forward with a higher price, so it was sold to Bill. Another pupil asked "why nobody wanted to give more than 120 dollars?" Henry described how before the auction all the prospective buyers had gone through the records of the cow and found how much milk per year it gave, what food it ate during the year and other costs and found out what amount spent on its price would be just covered by the price of milk. So the highest limit was calculated and those who wanted an animal would stop bidding when it reached this limit. The whole hour spent by those children in thinking these things out for themselves stimulated their faculties to a greater extent than the cramming of economic theories from Adam Smith to Marshall. When theories are based on experience, it leads gently on to the next stage of creation and originality.

The present system is not capable of producing original thinkers. Even Graduates of our universities have not reached this third stage. It is because of this defect that we are stagnating. As we have already seen, the instruction we were given was designed to make clerks of us and an original mind is no part of the equipment of a clerk. This stage requires some initiative and a good deal of self-confidence. The part the teachers should play is to stand by, watch and suggest.

No vocational training or education can be complete unless it has some relation to art. This part of our education has been attended to by Poet Tagore. The emphasis placed on folk songs, music and art must form part of every village school. If such schools can be found to function with a vocation of craft as the base and art as an aid, however simple the courses may be, the result will be an out-turn of men and women with a backbone of character and self-respect who will not purr round the feet of foreign masters for a silken couch to lie on but who will hold their head erect, be independent, and be prepared to share the lowly life of the general run of the people. Unless we bend all our might to produce such a stalwart nation, broad based on the sound culture of the masses, it will be futile to attempt to build a superstructure. No nation can ever hope to take its place in the vanguard of the nations which has not got its roots in its own culture. We cannot shine on borrowed feathers. We have to develop our own contribution to the world of literature, art and music.

Of course, as Gandhiji suggested, college education must be made self-supporting. An agricultural college which cannot maintain itself on the land allotted to it betrays the object for which it exists. Similarly, all other professional and technical colleges should be made to pay for themselves

## CHAPTER X

### LIFE IN GREGATION

Up to now we have discussed mainly life of an individual in connection with his daily economic life. In this chapter we shall deal with man as a member of a society leading a common life. We have been envisaging human life as part of nature. Thus each man's life is but a passing phase in the existence of the universe. In this setting our daily life also has to be reviewed.

The individual life of man may be a short range one if we look at his life as an end in itself, but when it dovetails in the lives of others there are certain limitations which arise. Man cannot act as he pleases. His movements have to be restricted in consideration of the well being of others. Therefore the personal habits of each individual, health and abode have a bearing on the conditions prevailing in the environment.

With this end in view we shall have to lay out general lines on which people should live in groups. In India many of our human abodes are clusters of houses, hamlets and huts which form our villages. The village life, therefore, has to be studied from this aspect of common welfare.

To take one instance man eats to replace the wastage in his body, to supply energy and to provide vitality to protect him against diseases, etc. Out of the food the body takes what it requires and returns to nature what is not assimilated. The rejected element has to be so returned to nature as to enable nature to assimilate it to itself and

at the same time in such a manner as not to injure other fellowmen. Thus there are two aspects to every one of these questions and these will be touched upon in the following paragraphs.

In this chapter, therefore, we shall be rapidly glancing over the various points that should be attended to in regard to Sanitation, Health and Housing. And then we shall pass on to consider the inter-relationship of man in villages which should facilitate the formation of an organized unit working smoothly on the socio-political axis apart from the economic aspect that we have already considered. These village units will form the basis of the self-governing nation. These will be the training grounds in which the villages will be prepared to take up the responsibilities in regard to public administration and self-government. Hence it is that it is important that we should lay great emphasis on these village organizations.

When the village organization is properly formed it should develop a peculiar culture of its own which will be a distinguishing feature of group, just as the personality is of the individual. These aspects of village life should bring us nearer to permanence. Human lives cover at best three score years and ten, but these units based on village culture endure for all time. The quality of the culture we develop will depend not only on human nature but also on the point of approach we have adopted all along in this volume. We have been approaching the problems as an application of the principles of non-violence and truth to our every day lives. If this is done carefully and attended to in every detail conscientiously we shall realise a society based on these principles.

### Sanitation ·

*Personal habits of cleanliness*—Villagers had generally a fairly high sense of personal cleanliness derived through tradition and habit. Unfortunately some of these good habits are being given up under a false sense of modernity. Therefore the value of all good old personal habits of cleanliness should be re-emphasised and where necessary new good habits included.

*Collective or group cleanliness*—This is the weakest link in our village life. Village paths, roads, public places and tank bunds have all become so many public latrines. Villagers answer calls of nature anywhere indiscriminately, polluting most of the places on which people walk about and defiling even the available drinking water. But the fault is not the villagers' wholly. There are no organized latrines or urinals in a village and houses are so crowded and small that each house has no such facilities. Therefore the construction and proper maintaining of latrines, urinals and bathing places on common basis becomes very necessary as also a plan to convert all rubbish and night-soil, etc., into manure. Such a programme is necessary from the point of view of sanitation and of village economy. The following details of group cleanliness are indicated:—

- (a) Suitable and cheap drains, even if only open ones, and their periodical cleaning and disinfecting with indigenous materials.
- (b) Use of drainage water for kitchen gardens and fruit trees and flushing latrines.
- (c) Collection of all rubbish and its conversion into manure.
- (d) Keeping village wells, paths, tanks and open places clean and uncontaminated.

- (e) The making and maintaining of small gardens for the village public, children's playground and clean little open spaces

### Health:

1 *Village dietetics*—Mal-nutrition is rampant in the villages. Villages must be taught the nutritive values of different articles of food which are or can be produced in the villages. Every family should understand the meaning of a balanced diet and how best to get it under village conditions.

The Health Department should take up educative work in this line in all the centres seriously. The Government should prohibit rice mills within the centres to begin with.

2 *Drinking water*—Supply of clean drinking water is a fundamental need. Many more wells are required in the villages. Old ones need to be repaired. In some cases clean and protected tanks will have to be made sources of drinking water. This is one of the items which should secure immediate priority.

3 *Preventive measures*.—Preventive measures against disease should be emphasised more than curative measures. This means emphasis on balanced diet, personal and collective sanitation and general healthy living with provision for recreations and exercises.

4. *Ordinary ailments and cheap remedies*—Common village ailments and their prevention and cure should be taught. Natural methods and cheap remedies with suitable village herbs and drugs should be emphasised. Every family should be supplied with and taught the use of cheap disinfectants. The Health Department should investigate the value of poisonous herbs, weeds, etc., in this connection.

5. *Recreations and exercises.*—Provision of space and equipment for open air recreations and exercises should be made in every village. Exercises like *Suryanamashar*, *asanas*, and collective village games should be encouraged and organized

### Housing:

Better and healthier houses are an important item. Village houses are insanitary, overcrowded and built without any common plan. This has to be altered under a well-conceived plan which will be drawn up by the village panchayat in consultation with public health and public works authorities available near at hand. The following points need emphasis:—

1. Relieving congestion of village houses by providing extension sites for buildings under a plan.

2. Future house building to be on a co-operative basis.

3. Improvement of existing houses through educative propaganda.

4. Provision of some kind of drainage for individual houses and for the streets. The first is obtained by digging and maintaining soak pits which will be periodically cleaned and changed. The second is done through simple and cheap drainage system, even if open, which will be periodically cleaned and disinfected. Normally drainage water should be used for vegetable gardens and fruit trees.

5. Village houses being small and overcrowded, common latrines, bathing and washing places should be provided.

6. Immediate levelling up of all stagnant water pools and pits which become sources of malarial infection.

7. Laying out and improvement of village paths and roads on planned basis.

8 Model houses suited to village conditions should be made and exhibited by Public Health and Public Works Departments.

9. In select places where old villages cannot be improved in sanitation and health conditions, an attempt should be made in transplanting the village progressively to a new site nearby with free gift of land and small building subsidies on a co-operative basis.

10. In all new enterprises and schemes of house building care should be taken to do away with the present segregation of the Harijan living quarters from the rest of the village.

#### **Village Organization :**

Village organization can be undertaken under three institutions —(1) A village panchayat for village administration on the basis of Village Self-Government, (2) Multi-purpose Co-operative Society for the economic organization of the village and (3) a Gram Seva Sangha to mobilise non-official support and initiative to back up the work of the whole scheme of Rural Development on the basis of voluntary effort.

1. *The village panchayat*—There will have to be a village panchayat for each village or a group of villages elected on adult franchise, the villages being divided into wards for convenient sections for the purpose

The panchayat will have direct responsibility in regard to all village services, such as, village roads, village water-supply, village education, village dispensaries, village sanitation, administration of justice within certain limits, village lighting, etc. These services will have to be compulsorily provided for in every village. If the revenue raised and allotted



is not sufficient to provide for those services the deficit should be borne by Government.

There will be another set of services like libraries, village halls, exhibitions, etc., which should be paid for partly by local contributions and partly by Government

There should be a panchayat union for all the panchayats in the selected areas. The duty of such a union will be to link up the various essential services under the village panchayats. The union will thus guide, supervise and co-ordinate the activities of village panchayats and audit their accounts. The union will further undertake basic or post-basic education and maintain bigger hospitals and maternity homes. An Assistant Engineer attached to the union will prepare estimates and execute all work.

The union of panchayats will consist of representatives from the various panchayats in the centre. It will get contributions from the panchayats and grants from the Government.

*N. B.* - The village panchayats should be something more than mere administrative agencies. They should help in training villagers generally in civic responsibility, giving every adult knowledge of the rights and duties of village citizenship. They should also take up the tasks of social reforms like the abolition of common vices such as gambling, etc., abolition of superstitions and social evils, like untouchability, etc.

Special organized efforts will have to be made for the uplift and assimilation in the body politic of sections of societies like Harijans and Adiwasis who have been victims of social injustice. The unfortunate condition of women is a more serious problem which cannot be tackled singly by an institution or a department. It is a matter of awakening social conscience

and overcoming old prejudices. Special attention will have to be paid in this direction. A few women workers having practical approach and some knowledge of home science (cooking, medicines, weaving, tailoring, etc.) may prove useful for this work.

2. *Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies* — Just as the panchayat is the instrument of political and administrative organization, the Multi-purpose Co-operative Society is the instrument for the economic organization of the village. The Multi-purpose Co-operative Society will deal with the following items:—

1. The obtaining, and storage of the food produce of the village.

2. The processing of food articles.

3. The balanced distribution of local products and of such imports as are necessary.

4. The stocking and supply of the instruments for agricultural operations, village industries, etc.

5. The stocking and supply of raw materials like cotton, wood, metal, etc., for local industries

6. The marketing of finished products

7. Arranging for the exchange of surplus village produce for necessary materials and goods from outside.

8. The organization of important village industries as inter-related co-operative units, so that, as far as possible profits and benefits are equitably shared by the village community as a whole. Care should also be taken to see that the people as a whole are gainfully employed so that the available labour (human resources) is fully utilized. The

object is that there should be no unemployment or under-employment

9. Up-to-date technicians and those with artistic training should be made available to village artisans to help and improve their work. The cost of such instruction and supervision should be borne by the Government.

10 There should be one fully trained Co-operative Inspector for each area.

11 Furnishing available information and guidance to the villages and villagers.

3. *Gram Seva Sanghas*.—The question may be raised, where is the place for a Gram Seva Sangha, where a panchayat and a Multi-purpose Co-operative Society are together organizing village life. It should not be forgotten that the village panchayat and the Multi-purpose Co-operative Society will be run only by a few elected people whereas all the adults who have elected them will have only a waiting and watching programme unless they are also harnessed to constructive work under the various headings of village reconstruction. The Gram Seva Sanghas will be non-official voluntary bodies which would organize all such work as will help the panchayat and the Multi-purpose Co-operative Society to fulfil their task. Rural development officers and village development officers and others should help in organizing, strengthening and utilizing the Gram Seva Sanghas which should be autonomous bodies with their own constitution, rules and funds. Government may give grants to these Gram Seva Sanghas, but without fettering their autonomy. The Gram Seva Sanghas will organize bodies of voluntary workers for village sanitation, for the regulation of village meetings and festivals, for the protection of life and property

in the villages and for various services on such occasions as the prevalence of epidemics or floods or similar emergencies. In fact for every full-time paid worker under Government, Panchayat or Multipurpose Society there will have to be numerous non-official voluntary servants of the village from the village trained for such work by the Gram Seva Sanghas.

NOTE.—We have dealt with Village Panchayats, Multipurpose Co-operative Societies and Gram Seva Sanghas as the three instruments of village organization. But the ultimate aim of village organization is village self-sufficiency in food and clothing and other major needs of village life as also self-reliance and self-dependence as far as possible as the foundation of village life and all this to be achieved on democratic and peaceful lines.

#### **Village Culture,—**

Village culture is a much neglected item. Neither Village Self-Government nor Village Self-sufficiency will be real or permanent without the solid influence of village culture. India has evolved through the centuries a village culture which has fairly stood the test of time. It must be rediscovered, valued and developed. The village woman particularly indicates the inheritance of this culture adding beauty and strength to village life. It has often been said that a village grand-mother can put a university graduate to shame with her practical wisdom and understanding of life and its problems. The following suggestions are made to nourish village culture:—

1. Study of village traditions and habits, village institutions and village history.
2. Study of folk songs, folk tales and folk art.
3. Recovery and improvement of artistic handicrafts and village art in general.

4. Organization of *bhajans*, *kuthans*, *dramatics*, etc., for village education.

5. *Organization of village festivals and important religious occasions to strengthen the unity of village life without distinction of caste and community*—People belonging to different communities should be encouraged to take part in each other's festivals and religious occasions in a spirit of common happiness.

6. Organization of village libraries, village museums and village study circles.

7. Provision for healthy and open air recreations like games, folk dances, excursions, etc.

NOTE—The reorganization of village culture should be creative and should aim at giving the village a high sense of the values that should govern his life as an individual and as the unit of a new society.

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## CHAPTER XI

### A PILOT PLAN

Hitherto we have studied the various aspects of life which should be moulded so as to bring about an economy of permanence. We have indicated the lines on which the country has to be organized

To enable us to achieve this end it is necessary to have a laboratory unit, as it were, and which will also provide a training ground for workers. Therefore a village or a group of villages may be taken as the unit and work on all fronts may be organized in the selected area or region on the lines hitherto considered. For this work associations may be formed in such a way that the member of each association will function as though they were independent republics managing their affairs themselves in the various spheres of village life. These may be termed "Lok Seva Sanghs" working on a common plan.

Such Sanghs, when in full swing, will form the necessary "Opposition" to the governments in as much as they would indicate to the government the lines on which their administration may move.

In a competitive economy the executive part of the government is checked and directed by the opposition; but in an economy, as contemplated by us, based on non-violence and truth, there can be no such opposition. Our effort should be to attract government attention to our method of work and make them imitate our schemes in the measures they undertake. This organization, in the first instance, will be

formed in various centres. These will ultimately join together or be united to form the Lok Sevak Sangh. This will be a formidable force and the government cannot ignore it. The policy of the Sangh will therefore have considerable weight in the councils of the nation.

The following is a suggested organization for the Sangh:-

### **The Cabinet**

The Lok Sevak Sangh will be composed of a cabinet of about 9 members including the President and a Secretary. Apart from the President and the Secretary, the other members will hold portfolios for various departments and they will be the Sanchalaks of those departments. The departments will be 1 Health 2 Education 3. The Economic Sector 4 The Political Sector 5. Social Sector 6 Publications.

### **Sanchalak's Council:**

The policy in regard to these departments will be settled by the Sanchalaks in Council in the Cabinet. The Executing part of it will be carried out by the Sanchalaks in their own departments with a council of their own. The Sanchalak's Council will be composed of technicians of the different lines of activity in their own department.

For instance the *Health Council* will be made up of a Mantri in charge of Dietetics, another in charge of Child and General Welfare, and a third in charge of Sanitation and so on. Similarly, each such department will have its own Council of Mantries over which the Sanchalaks will preside.

### **Committee of Mantries.**

These Councils of Mantries will be supported by Technical Committees composed of provincial or regional representatives. For example the Dietetic work Committee

will be composed of the Mantri at the centre in charge of dietetics and dieteticians from all over the country belonging to provincial or regional organizations of the Lok Sevak Sangh. The Technical Committee will, therefore, be able to exchange notes on the experience in their own lines from all over the country

Similar organizations will function in different regions. Thus, the country should be covered with organizations of this type which will be working in an organic unity.

### **Parliament of Sanchalaks :**

The Central Lok Sevak Sangh Cabinet will, from time to time, call a Parliament of Sanchalaks from all the sister Provincial or Regional Lok Sevak Sanghs and discuss questions arising out of policy.

In the same way there will be an Assembly of Technicians to exchange their experiences and knowledge gained in their line.

Similar Councils of Mantries and Technical Committees will function under each of the departments.

### **Education :**

Education, for instance, will have pre-basic and basic education imparted by various Talimi Sanghs, and another section will take up Hindustani Prachar and still another will have Vidyapiths for post-basic training which will impart professional and occupational education on the University level, as well as carry on research. Such Vidyapiths will be responsible for providing recruits and training them to the required level, for absorption in the various phases of the Constructive Programme. The Vidyapiths themselves will be fed by the Talimi Sanghs.



### The Economic Sector

The Economic Sector will have under it the departments of Agriculture, Gram Udyog and Multi-Purpose Societies along with political and propaganda sections.

*Agriculture* will deal with all matters connected with the occupational as well the self-sufficiency aspects of this vital industry. The former will be mostly concerned with production for exchange, such as money crops. The latter will feature production for use and will include growing of vegetables and fruits in garden lands.

*Animal Husbandry* will carry on the work of Cattle Breeding, Sheep Breeding, Goat Rearing and other allied industries such as Sericulture and Pisciculture. In this section will also be included Dairy Production and Distribution. This will again have a bye-product section which will be closely connected with the Primary Needs sub-section of the Economic Sector and deal in horn articles, leather tanning, making of guls, glue etc

*Gram Udyog* will, in the first instance, deal with food processing industries in close co-operation with Agriculture Department. Another section of it will deal with consumer goods including primary needs such as clothing, soap making, paper making pottery, tannery etc

*The Multi-purpose Societies* will form the co-ordinating link between the producers and the consumers and perform also the functions of distributors. They will obtain raw materials and dole them out to the producers, collect the finished articles and market them. As far as practicable they will render functional aids rather than give financial help.

*The Political Section* will be the connecting link between the economic activities of the people and the Government.

The Secretary in charge of this section will be the liaison officer between the people and the Government. He will contact the Provincial and Central Governments, whenever necessary, to shape the control of Key Industries in the interests of the people's activities and assure the proper functioning of controlled National Services.

The other section of this department will be for Propaganda which will disseminate such information as is gathered by the Research Department of the Vidyapith and other facts and figures which may be of use to the people, and work in close touch with the Publication Sector.

#### **Political Sector :**

The Political Sector will have a department in charge of the organization of Village Panchayats and other political bodies and a second section will be detailed out with the duty of keeping in touch with Provincial and Central Governments activities and will function in close co-operation with the liaison officer of the Economy Sector.

#### **Social Sector :**

The Social Sector will have departments for 1. Communal Unity 2. Uplift of Harijans and Backward Tribes 3. Organizing Kisan Labour and other workers 4 Training of Youths and Volunteers Bodies in national work 5 Removing of the Disabilities of Women

#### **Publication**

The Publication Department will take up publications of books which will be of permanent use, both as text books and as reference books, and will also deal with the issue of periodicals, which will keep the various activities in touch with one another and with the rest of the world. In this depart-

ment the Navajivan Trust may play an important role and the present journal "Harijan" may become transformed into the "Lok Sevak" and carry on the message of Gandhiji to all the Constructive Workers.

### Conclusion :

This may appear an elaborate scheme. But in practice it should be simple of execution, The various Lok Sevak Sanghs will limit their activities to a group of 15 or 20 villages with a population of 25 to 30 thousand people and concentrate in their own sphere the various activities adumbrated above. The experience gained in so running these institutions in full co-operation with the people will be not only an education in public affairs to the people, but will also form a model to work upon for the Governments and prepare the way to realise in full measure the fruits of Swaraj of the proper type for the masses.

### PLEDGE FOR MEMBERS OF THE LOK SEVAK SANGH

1. Having read the Constitution and Rules of the Lok Sevak Sangh, I offer to be a Member there of, and God helping, promise to devote the best part of my energy and talents to the furtherance of its object which is the relief and service of the poor in the villages.

2. To the best of my ability I shall try to live up to the ideals of the Sangh.

3. In the discharge of my duties I shall seek the assistance and co-operation of all those who may be willing to give them, irrespective of differences in politics.

4. I will not take part in politics unless it be as directed or required by the Lok Sevak Sangh. If ordered to seek election to any of the Legislatures, I will live

on such amount as is allowed by the Lok Sevak Sangh to its workers and turn in the excess, if any, to the Lok Sevak Sangh.

5. I will always wear only Khadi, made from self-spun yarn, or certified by the All India Spinners' Association and shall prefer the use of village manufactures to any other. I shall abstain from all alcoholic drinks. I abjure untouchability in any shape or form in my own person and in my family. I believe in inter-communal unity. I respect and hold in regard all religions. I subscribe to the equality of opportunity and status being extended to all irrespective of race, creed or sex.

*Signature*

Such organized Lok Sevak Sanghs will be studied all over the country leavening the people in public affairs. They will form the training ground for statesmen who will have to shoulder the larger burdens in the national arena.

Until the country is prepared to take up this type of organization and whole heartedly take to a society based on non-violence and truth there can be no hope of any permanence in our economic, social or political life. The present type of organization based on competition and centralized industries lands us periodically into terrific upheavals. These have to be avoided if nations are to progress steadily towards a set goal, which will bring peace amongst nations and prosperity to the citizen.

Only in such a state can we expect fair play for the weak, justice to the common man, where might will not be right and where there will be no premium on deceit and





exploitation. Such a society will not have the glamour of ill-gotten gains; neither will there be the attraction of racket carriers, but it will have a steady upway trend towards a stable culture bringing man out from the jungle bestowing on him the dignity of a human being. This calls for a considerable amount of self-discipline and self-control. We hope these will be forthcoming in the required measure and thus enable us to see the advent of the economy of permanence.

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THE ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION  
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